

women, it is important that we encourage our girls to participate in athletics and other physical activities. And the benefits that girls receive from participating in sports are far more than physical. Through sports, young girls learn leadership, self confidence, teamwork, and a host of other skills that they will use through their entire life. It is important that we, as a society, support these girls and women in their athletic endeavors.

Aside from just praising the fine women sports teams of Louisiana, I would like to offer special thanks to the organizations that are members of the coalition for National Girls and Women in Sports Day: the American Association of University Women, Girl Scouts of the USA, Girls Incorporated, the National Association for Girls and Women in Sports, the National Women's Law Center, the Women's Sports Foundation, and the YWCA USA.

Introducing our young women to athletics and encouraging their active participation in such events, is an important task, and one I look forward to doing with my own daughter. Today I commend the achievements of all girls and women throughout this country that participate in sports, and ask that my colleagues join me in honoring the National Girls and Women in Sports Day.●

#### TRIBUTE TO UNDEFEATED AUBURN UNIVERSITY TIGERS

● Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to the undefeated 2004 Auburn University football team. The Auburn Tigers went 13-0 this season winning both the Southeastern Conference Championships and the Nokia Sugar Bowl. They finished the season tied for the best record in the land and, in my opinion, made a strong case for a national championship.

The Auburn Tigers finished the season ranked first in the Nation in scoring defense and fifth in the Nation in total defense. They also won four games over Associated Press top 10 teams—the most of any Division I team during the 2004 season.

While many Auburn players and coaches received individual accolades throughout the season, I believe that their dedication to extraordinary teamwork is an enduring tribute more impressive than any trophy or award. Saturday after Saturday, this team came prepared to play their hearts out and leave it all on the field. As the weeks passed, it became apparent to anyone watching that their efforts were more about a team, a brotherhood, and a community focused on victory than on individual accomplishments. The dedication, hard work, and focus of these players and their coaches are undeniable.

Individually, Auburn's players accomplished great things. Four Auburn

players earned All-America honors: offensive tackle Marcus McNeill, defensive back Carlos Rogers, safety Junior Rosegreen, and running back Carnell Williams. Two freshmen, Stanley McClover and Quenton Groves, earned Freshman All-America honors, and Carlos Rogers won the Jim Thorpe Award, which is presented to the Nation's top defensive back. Senior quarterback Jason Campbell won the most valuable player award for the Sugar Bowl and the Southeastern Conference Championship game; while also garnering SEC offensive player of the year and SEC player of the year honors as well as Most Valuable Player of the South squad in the 2005 Senior Bowl.

I believe it is important to emphasize that the young men who make up this outstanding Auburn football team understand that they are students first, and then athletes. The academic focus of these players is exemplified by the fact that 9 of the 18 seniors playing in the Sugar Bowl had already earned their bachelor's degrees and 17 players made the Southeastern Conference Academic honor roll. I commend the players and coaches for ensuring that academic achievement is not sacrificed for athletic success.

Auburn's head coach Tommy Tuberville is to be commended for his achievements as well. Coach Tuberville was the recipient of six Coach of the Year awards including the Associated Press, Paul "Bear" Bryant, American Football Coaches Association, Schutt Sports, Walker Camp, and Southeastern Conference awards.

I join Auburn fans across the country in recognizing their accomplishments, honoring their achievements and praising their teamwork. I am proud of their outstanding record and am inspired by their ability to overcome adversity to achieve success. The Auburn University Tigers showed football fans everywhere what it means to play as a team.●

#### HONORING VEL PHILLIPS

● Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, today I honor the accomplishments of Vel Phillips, a pioneer in Wisconsin history, who turns 81 on February 18.

The celebration of Black History Month in the State of Wisconsin cannot be complete without including Vel. In 1951, Vel was the first African-American woman to graduate from the University of Wisconsin Law School. She and her husband Dale moved to Milwaukee, where they became the first husband-wife attorney team admitted to the Federal bar.

Vel's is a household name in Milwaukee, where she was first inspired to run for office doing door-to-door voter registration. She was the first woman and first African American elected to the Milwaukee Common Council. Vel literally came under fire as she fought

for open housing in Milwaukee, when gunshots left a bullet lodged in her oven. But no threats, no matter how real or how terrifying, could change Vel's unshakeable commitment to making Milwaukee a more just city and to making the world a better place.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., said, "We must be the drum majors for peace," and Vel heeded his marching orders. She was arrested at a rally at the burned-out NAACP Freedom House, the site of a previous night's retaliatory firebombing. Two weeks before Dr. King's assassination, the Milwaukee Common Council passed the open housing bill.

In 1971, Vel Phillips was appointed Wisconsin's first African-American judge. In 1978, she again reached another milestone with her election as secretary of state, first statewide office held by an African American. Now, at 81, Vel continues to make a difference in Milwaukee, and it is a privilege to call her a friend.

Vel Phillips is a distinguished figure in the progress of the civil rights movement in Wisconsin. Her life of firsts and steadfast determination to make a difference is an inspiration to me and a reminder of the need to advance and protect the civil rights of all Americans as we celebrate Black History Month.●

#### RECOGNIZING ERIC A. ORSINI

● Mr. ALLEN. Mr. President, I'm extremely proud to recognize a dedicated American who has retired after 64 years of service to the United States Army. This month, Mr. Eric A. Orsini of Stafford, VA, departed Government work at the age of 87.

Mr. Orsini began his service to country as a private in the Army in 1941. During World War II, he was highly decorated, earning the Bronze Star, the Silver Star and the Purple Heart in combat which included fighting in the Battle of the Bulge. Upon retiring from the military as a Colonel with 30 years of service, Mr. Orsini began working as a Senior Executive in the Department of the Army, where he would spend an additional 34 years, specializing in improving logistics support to our soldiers.

Today, I wish Mr. Orsini the best in his well-deserved retirement. I'm pleased to hear that he will now finally have the opportunity to improve his golf game, go fishing more often and spend more time with his family.

It is truly an honor to recognize a fellow Virginian for his distinguished service as both a soldier and a government civil servant. Mr. Orsini, your country thanks you for your courageous and meritorious work in the name of freedom.●